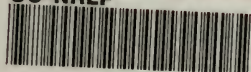


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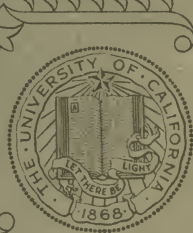
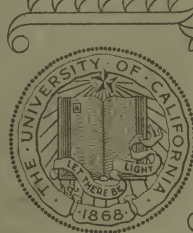
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THE

PROPHET OF ST. PAUL'S,

A PLAY, IN FIVE ACTS,

BY

DAVID PAUL BROWN.



PHILADELPHIA :

PUBLISHED BY CAREY & HART,

Corner of Fourth and Chesnut streets.

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THE FOLLOWING IMPERFECT

DRAMATIC SKETCH,

Hastily drawn in the scanty intervals afforded by an arduous profession,

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

TO

THE MEMBERS OF THE PHILADELPHIA BAR.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.



· E N G L I S H .

HENRY VIII. OF ENGLAND.

DUKE OF NORFOLK.

DUKE OF SUFFOLK, (CHARLES BRANDON.)

CARDINAL WOLSEY.

MARQUIS OF DORSET.

PERCY OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

MARY, PRINCESS OF ENGLAND, AFTERWARDS QUEEN OF FRANCE.

ANNE BOLEYN.

Attendants, &c.

F R E N C H .

LOUIS XII. OF FRANCE.

DUKE OF VALOIS, (FRANCIS I.)

DUKE OF VENDOME.

CHEVALIER BAYARD.

DE LONGUEVILLE, AMBASSADOR TO ENGLAND.

AMAREL, (THE KING'S JESTER.)

TWIST, (A TAILOR.)

STELLA OF MONTMORENCY.

CHARMEAN, HER ATTENDANT.

Knights, Attendants, &c.

The first Act is in England—the remainder in France.

PROLOGUE,

BY A FRIEND.



OUR drama treats of beauty and of love ;
Scenes it exhibits for the brave and fair—
Especial scenes to greet the indulgent sight
Of dazzling eyes that sparkle here to-night.
Scenes that through good and evil fortune prove
How worth can suffer, and how love can dare.

Nature, through all her ever varying round,
Still to herself is true. Tho' rank disguise
Her honest features ; tho' a radiant throne
Lend pomp and human grandeur not its own
To the pure spirit ;—its essence still is found
'Neath gilded roofs and gorgeous canopies.

Trace we the wand'rings of a hero's heart—
Beats it not high upon the tented field ?
Swells not his bosom, when the clarion's breath
Summons to victory, or glorious death ?
These ecstacies that glory can impart,
For the pure joys of mutual love, he 'll yield.

Love stills the tumult in the sailor's breast
When tempest tost upon the surging wave :
Or nerves his arm, and fires his gallant soul
In the fierce war. Love sweetens sorrow's bowl—
Gives to the purest bliss, its richest zest—
Steels the faint heart, and subjugates the brave.

The prince and peasant—statesman—scholar—all :
Whether in robes and dignity they shine,
Or fill their destiny in lowlier state :
Whate'er their fortune, and where'er their fate ;
Before one sacred shrine they prostrate fall,
And all their gifts to beauty they resign.

P R O L O G U E .

Man's stubborn soul, his nature thus obeys ;
Submits to love, and dares not thence to roam.
But there is yet a sphere, more fitting far,
A holier sanctuary ; where the shining star
At morn and eve alike, sheds its pure rays—
A female heart is love's especial home.

See her, who, saintlike in her faith and charms,
Keeps the lone watches of the livelong night,
For the ungrateful one, whose hours he wastes
In revelry : or from the banquet hastes
To baser revels in pollution's arms—
Still bleeds for him her heart—still strains her aching sight.

But, ah ! what rapture fills that female breast,
Whose each fond thought an echoing thought repays ;
Scorning, without the man she loves, a throne ;
Seeking a dungeon, if condemned alone,
He suffer there : and blessing still and blessed,
Soothes his dark hours, and gilds his brighter days.

These are not yet, love's sharpest, bitterest woes ;
To share affliction—for neglect to groan :
The slave who suffers from his galling chain
Sees on his limbs no self inflicted stain :
And he that dies beneath th' oppressor's blows
Feels the death dealing hand is not his own.

But when two kindred fervent spirits join
In mutual loyalty—affection—all
(Save nuptial vows) that can true hearts unite :
And then in nature's and in love's despite
The violet breath of marriage must decline ;
Into what depths of wretchedness they fall !

And if compelled by custom's stern decree,
Or nerveless, from a sterner despot's blow,
They to the sacrifice assistance lend ;
And, votaries at once and victims, bend
At th' altar rear'd by pride or tyranny ;
Deeper and deeper yet, they plunge in wo.

Thence to redeem them were the drama's part ;
If, haply, hist'ry had not lent her hand,
First, with a crown, love's visions to destroy,
Then love to crown with unimagined joy ;
Teaching how faithfully the rules of art
With truth and nature may forever stand.

THE

PROPHET OF ST. PAUL'S.

ACT I.

SCENE I—*A Palace.*

Enter KING HENRY VIII. and CARDINAL WOLSEY, apparently engaged in conference.

King Henry. Speak plainly, Wolsey! and forget the King,
It is the King commands.

Wolsey. Well, then, my Lord, obedient to that duty,
Which your behests impose upon your servant,
Howe'er reluctant to divulge the secret;
'Tis whispered that your foster brother, Suffolk,
Rear'd at your side by your most gracious sire,
Unmindful of those high and proud degrees
That stand between his sphere and royalty,
Has dared to fix his eye—

King Henry. What! Traitor, on the Crown?

Wolsey. Nay, not the crown, my liege! and yet so near
That it might seem a jewel of that crown,
Whose loss would dim its lustre.

King Henry. God's death, Lord Cardinal! thy priestly craft
Is so engrafted on thy loyal stock,
That, like the ivy, it o'ershadows it
And eats the heart out. What dost thou mean?
Equivocate no longer—speak thy fears.

Wolsey. That jewel is thy sister, good my Lord!
The peerless Princess Mary.

King Henry. Our sister! What—Suffolk would woo our sister!
And they would wed! Pride and Humility
Would be united! Ay, the blood of Tudor,
Running to the lees, shall join in base commixture

With the pool, the stagnant pool, that warms
A vassal's veins!

What think you, Cardinal, which merits most
The princess who resigns her royal sphere,
Or the proud subject, who o'erleaps all duty
And matches with his sovereign?

Wolsey. Pardon, my liege!

My thoughts, being dedicate to things above,
Chastised by penance and austere reproof,
Consort not with the play of youthful blood,
And look, perchance, too sternly on those faults
Which nature unreformed shall justify.

King Henry. Curse on this cant! dost palter with a King?
Thou prate of penance? Costly arrogance!
Speak next of poverty, while thy rich coffers
Groan with the wealth that drains the Exchequer
And beggars all the realm. No more of this!

Wolsey. I am your Grace's steward; what is mine
Is wholly yours—nay, I, myself, am yours;
The only worldly treasure that I prize,
And which with life alone I will surrender,
Is the proud triumph of your royal favour,
Which made me, and which keeps me what I am.
Though Heaven knows I never sought preferment,
Your gracious bounty has exalted me
So near the throne, so far above desert,
That it becomes not one who stands so proudly,
—Yet ever mindful of his low beginnings—
To scorn the Duke's ambition.

King Henry. Nay, no evasion, my Lord Cardinal!
If not a lover, thou art still a statesman,
Ready and ripe in Court diplomacy,
And jealous of the glory of thy sovereign.
Talk not of hearts—leave those to brainsick boys
And wild romance. This is a State concern,
It smacks of policy. Where kingly honour
And royal faith frown on the base alliance,
'T is treason to the realm. Speak, then, thy thinking.

Wolsey. My Lord, since you enforce my poor opinion,
I will no more withhold it; you shall read
In my plain tongue a transcript of my thoughts.
But, it is said, the noble pair have had
A kingly warrant for their mutual love—
That *you*, my liege! have *seen*, have *sanctioned* it.

King Henry. We sanction it!
Sanction the union of the Swan and Raven,
The Eagle and the Linnet. Sanction it?
We sanction, too, the reverence to the throne,

The attribute and awe of majesty ;
 But shall the fool, that bows before that throne,
 Upon this sanction straight usurp the chair,
 As the reward of his knee reverence,
 And plead the royal warrant ?
 If every knave build on his own construction,
 Death's decrees shall loose their bloody impress,
 And become a passport to a regal entertainment.
 Where is the aspiring Duke ?

Wolsey.

For days, my liege !

His absence has been noted from the Court.

King Henry.

Let him *be* absent. Brave De Longueville,
 The courtly envoy from puissant France,
 Proposes for the King, his royal master,
 Alliance with the Princess. By the Rood !
 The treaty shall be closed, aye, on the instant ;
 She is no subject's mate. Thou hast been secret ;
 Be thou secret still ; for ere another day
 Shall run its course, my sister is betroth'd,
 And Suffolk taught, that princes, like the stars,
 Were made to gaze at, by vulgar eyes
 With awe and reverence—to worship not to wed.
 —Now to the Council.

Wolsey.

I attend you, Sire !

Your Grace's policy confounds my weakness.

(*Exit King Henry.*)

Like the devout astronomer, who gazed
 With naked eye on the effulgent sun
 In close communion with these *earthly* planets,
 I am struck blind with light.
 Savoy's proud princess, the fair Margaret,
 In lineage scarcely rivalled by the King,
 Was not too high, so Henry thought, for Suffolk ;
 And when, to captivate her haughty eye,
 A dukedom was conferred on humble Brandon,
 Fledged by that bounty, the ambitious youth,
 Now, like the falcon, circling in the air,
 Pursues another lure—and foils his master. (*Exit.*)

SCENE II.—*A Bye-street in the neighbourhood of St. Paul's.*

Enter the PRINCESS MARY—muffled, and in a loose disguise.

Princess Mary. 'Tis but one effort ! This must be the cell
 Which I have thus long sought, and sought in vain,
 Now *found* perhaps in vain, for what avails
 Prediction's voice to such a wretch as I am,
 Unless to antedate the grief to come ?
 To come ! what grief can equal that I bear ?

What change can prove unwelcome to the heart
 That groans beneath the heaviest penalties
 That disappointed and perverted love
 Can heap upon it?—I will know the worst,
 If worse can still remain than what I suffer—
 Wedded to a king—not with my love,
 But 'gainst my plighted love. O hard condition!
 That makes the princely state, in wretchedness
 Supreme, as well as pride. The humble hind,
 Who toils and sweats from morn till eventide,
 Still sits supreme upon his bosom's throne,
 In native majesty, and sways the heart
 To its own purpose, loves and is belov'd,
 And in the dear delights of mutual joy
 Looks down upon the worldly pageantry,
 The pride, the pomp, the tumult and parade
 That hide the anguish'd soul and drown its groans.
 I'll think no more—thought thickens upon thought,
 And, like a dark and ravenous bird of prey,
 Gloats, while it gluts, upon the quivering heart
 To die of surfeit.—Doubts are worse than doom,
 And thus I draw the curtain of my fate,
 Betide what may! *(Knocks at the Door of the Hovel.)*

Prophet, (voice from within.) Daughter! approach—in dark disguise,
 Impervious to vulgar eyes;
 To me thy hidden griefs are known,
 To me thy future fate is shown;
 Approach, fair Dame! and learn from me
 The presage of thy destiny.

(Scene changes, and exhibits the Prophet of St. Paul's, surrounded by all the necromantic and cabalistic symbols of his art.—A large volume open before him.)

Princess Mary. Thou hast divined my purpose, holy seer!
 As well thou mightst—for what alas! could bring
 A hapless maiden to a cell like this,
 But the desire to learn from destiny,
 In whose dark volume, by report thou 'rt skilled,
 How much remains—to suffer or enjoy!

Prophet. What wouldst thou—that my science may unfold
 The secret motive of the life that's past?
 The peril that o'erhangs the present moment?
 Or the dark pages of Futurity?
 Past, present, future—all lie open here,
 Inscribed in characters of living light! *(peruses his Book.)*
 Mary of England! answer—what wouldst thou?

Princess Mary. Canst tell my *fate*—and yet not tell my *will*?

Prophet. A woman's will may change before I read it:
 Uncertain to herself, who else shall know it?—

The veering winds shall baffle prophecy.

Princess Mary. Thy science is a stranger to the Courts;
It wears no royal livery, my good seer!

Prophet. It wears the livery of Truth, fair Madam!
The vesture of the starry court above,
Where virtue reigns supreme and the free soul
Owes fealty only to the KING OF KINGS.

Princess Mary, (*letting fall her cloak.*) Disguise is vain.—Behold me as I am,
And as I would I were not, England's princess!
Thou knowst the present—speak, then, of the future—
What of the threatened *marriage?*—*Shall it be?*

Prophet. Stretch forth thy hand—nay, shrink not, gentle dame!
I'll yield it thee again—a moment past—
Ah, couldst thou ever thus reclaim the truant—

(*Examines the hand.*)

This is a chaste cold hand—a virgin palm—
Free from shame's impress; yet these crimson lines
Bespeak a mutual pledge of secret love,
Giv'n at York Terrace on Midsummer Eve,
'Neath the pale light of the attesting moon,
When first the vows of sacred faith were plighted
And sealed with courtly lips on this fair palm.
Nay, blush not, lady! the pure eye of Heaven
Alone hath seen it.—The o'erruling fates
Frown not upon the virtuous bond of hearts,
But on the *broken vow.*

Princess Mary. 'T is not *yet* broken, Father!

Prophet. Nay, but it shall be.
Thy doom is fixed—and thus the record runs:

(*Reads the volume.*)

Changeful, cross'd and chequer'd doom,
Varied, as an April day!
Here are nuptials—there a tomb—
Here is health—and there decay.
Youth and age unite together,
Youth may bloom—but age must wither.

(*Turns the page.*)

On this mystic scroll are seen,
Shadow'd by the hand of fate,
"Maiden mother—throneless queen,"
Widow—in her wedding state!
Here is sunshine—there a cloud,
Here is mirth—and there a shroud;
Ere the merry peal is rung
The sad requiem shall be sung.

(*Turns the leaf again.*)

Turn we to a brighter page—
Youth no longer yields to age;

Cherish'd by love's balmy breath,
 Life eludes the grasp of Death.
 Broken vows once more are plighted,
 Sunder'd hearts again united.
 Thus, fair maiden, you behold
 Your destiny.—*The tale is told.* (Shuts the Book.)

Princess Mary. Father, adieu!—thou hast wak'd thoughts within me
 Which might have slumber'd, and which should have died.
 For the sad service thou hast rendered me,
 Accept this poor requital, and should time
 Restore me to the blessings I have lost—
 Present thou, then, this Ring, and name thy boon,
 'T is thine—upon the promise of a princess.
 (*Gives him a ring, and exit.*)

SCENE III.—*The Council Chamber of the Palace.*

Enter KING HENRY and CARDINAL WOLSEY.

King Henry. Well, my Lord Cardinal!—What sayst thou now?
 The Peers in Council have approv'd the marriage,
 And Longueville, impatient to convey
 The welcome tidings to the ears of France,
 Has taken his departure.
 Thus do I crush the proud, presumptuous duke;
 Is it not well, my Lord?

Wolsey. Your Royal *Will* is ever *well*, my liege!
 With your poor servant;—yet what says the princess?
 What *will* say the Duke?

King Henry. Thus has the *King* said,
 And woe betide the princess or the duke
 That mars our purpose!—Say no more, my Lord!
 Canst thou not see, when Kings are in the field,
 A subject's proudest duty—is submission?

Enter ATTENDANT.

Attendant. The Lord of Suffolk craves your Grace's ear.

King Henry. Let him approach. Now mark me, Cardinal!
 I'll play the surgeon to the wily duke
 And probe him to the quick.

Enter SUFFOLK.

Well, my Lord Suffolk! come at length to greet us,
 Though somewhat tardy, still with no reluctance,
 Upon this union with our Brother France!
 The bloody flag of war shall wave no longer;

Our Sister bears the olive branch of Peace,
 A dovelike herald 'twixt contending foes ;
 And nations, who for centuries have struggled
 With mailed arms in death's convulsive grasp,
 Shall now unite in the embrace of love.
 The princess, who combines the rose and lily,
 The emblems of opposing monarchies,
 Shall blend them into one. Is it not well, fair Cousin ?

Suffolk.

It is *not* well, my Liege!
 Howe'er the state determine, 't is not well
 To wed the princess to a sepulchre,
 A whited sepulchre of dead men's bones !

King Henry.

How now, young Lord ?—do you dispute our will ?

Suffolk.

I nor dispute, nor doubt your Highness' will ;
 That is omnipotent, and, as a subject,
 A loyal and a true one, I submit.
 But when your Grace holds parley with my thoughts,
 My thoughts must speak, and say it is *not well*.

King Henry.

Body o' me !—Hear you this, Lord Cardinal ?
 This smoothfaced traitor bandies words with Kings,
 And champions France and England to the lists !
 It shall not be, my Lord !—it shall not be !
 The purpos'd nuptials do not meet thy favour !
 The monarch is too old—the dame coerced,
 And Suffolk's is the age for love and law !
 Hark ye, my valiant Mars ! the die is cast,
 Our Sister Queen of France ;—and thou thyself,
 Unworthy of the honour we intend thee,
 That thou mayst burst in witness of her glory,
 Shalt swell the escort to the Gallic shores,
 With all the choicest chivalry and beauty
 Of this fair Isle. By day and night ! my Lord,
 We will unlord you—and unhead you too,
 If you deny our pleasure.—Look, then, to 't !
 Come, my Lord Cardinal, we would counsel with you
 Upon some urgent matters of the realm.
 Look to it, Suffolk ! (*Exeunt King and Cardinal.*)

Suffolk.

The die *is* cast ; but Royal fate reprieves,
 Against its will, the victim it condemns.
 The princess' escort ! by my holidam !
 The King's displeasure doth accord me more
 Than supplication ever could obtain ;
 Not sever'd yet—the heart still keeps its hold.
 I'll be her escort ; and with winkless eye
 I'll play the Dragon to the Hesperian fruit,
 And guard it, night and day.

Enter PRINCESS MARY.

- Princess Mary.* Lord Suffolk here!
Methought, I heard the King in loud discourse;
And now I find thee pale and fraught with rage.
What has befallen, Charles?
- Suffolk.* What should befall, fair princess, to a wretch
Whose sum of life is centered in one object,
When told that object's lost?
- Princess Mary.* My Lord, I know it all—I grieve to know it.
I share thy sufferings—more than share them, Suffolk!
The withered heart that throbs in this lone breast,
And, like a captive bird, assails its bars,
In frail and fruitless hopes of liberty,
Attests the fervour of my love for thee.
- Suffolk.* Say but the word, I'll burst the golden bonds,
And set the captive free.
- Princess Mary.* No more, my Suffolk!—We must yield to fate.
All struggles are in vain; and now we part
To meet no more—or meet as strangers meet.
- Suffolk.* Not part, my princess! by the King's commands
My duty and my service still attend you:
That hand, which thought to claim you as its own,
In sacrifice devotes you to another.
Oh, that the victim and the priest together
Might offer up their blood!
- Princess Mary.* *Thou* art deputed—*thou*, to be my escort!
It must not be—frail nature shudders at it.
I'll to my brother straight, and on my knees
Revoke this base commission.
- Suffolk.* And yield my life up to that brother's fury.
- Princess Mary.* Thy life!
- Suffolk.* What reasons canst thou urge against his will,
His angry will?—Thou canst not plead our love,
Or thou betrayst the weakness thou wouldst hide.
Hate will not be believed—for we have grown
From childhood to maturity together,
In constant and endearing sympathy.
If thou wilt have it so, I'll to the King
And brave the wasteful tempest of his passion,
Expose my heart, assume the double guilt
And pay the forfeit gladly with my blood.
I would do more for *thee*—although thou shun'st me.
- Princess Mary.* Forgive me, Suffolk! I am wild with woe.
Duty and love distract me—yet still hear me.
If thou *must* be companion of my voyage,
Remember thou art escort to a *queen*—

That the blue waves, which sever adverse shores,
Are Lethe's waves—oblivious of the past!

Suffolk.

I must, perforce, remember—
 'Would they might swallow up the *future* too!

Princess Mary.

Before we part, my Lord, another word,
 Which you will pardon, though it blurs your honour—
Midsummer Eve—I blush not to remember—
 Ingenuous nature never was a crime,
 And scorns this crimson mantle which it wears—
 When first I listened to thy plighted faith,
 And gave mine in return! Hast thou e'er named it?

Suffolk.

Named it, fair excellence? A thousand times—
 'Tis the communion 'twixt my heart and me,
 The vital principle by which I breathe
 Each day o' the year, each hour of the day;
 And every fleeting moment of each hour
 Linger upon that soul absorbing theme
 To prate of love and thee.

Princess Mary.

I take thy answer, and I bless thee, Suffolk!
 Forgive the weak suspicion. Here we part.
 To-morrow's sun shall light us on our journey;
 And, until then, farewell!

Suffolk.

Farewell, my princess, *evermore* farewell!

Princess Mary. Remember!

We part to meet no more—as we have met! (*Exit.*)

Suffolk.

Thus die the last gleams of a glorious day!
 Thus fade hope's visions and the charms of love!
 And all is dimness, darkness and the *grave*.
What is the grave? A pillow of repose,
 Where all must rest, and never more awake
 To the world's toil. Sinner and saint alike,
 Emperor and slave, king, peasant, lord and vassal,
 Pomp, poverty, humility and pride,
 Ambition, that disdains to tread the earth,
 And mounts among the stars—lo! here they lie!
 Empty distinction!—Honours, titles, power,
 Unite with meanness, beggary and shame.
 The grave alike receives them—while it mocks
 At the survivor's grief, who, in his turn,
 Awaits the mandate which he now deplures;
 Others shall weep for him—and in *their* fall
 They shall be wept by others. Thus the world
 Moves onward in its melancholy march,
 One vast extended funeral, fraught with tears;
 None cease to mourn, but those who cease to feel
 In the kind refuge of the grave's embrace.
 And yet we shun it—shudder at our friend,

Cling to the fitting phantoms that delude us,
 Build in the winds—confide upon the waves,
 Nor see the tempest that shall wreck our hopes,
 Nor dream of changing tides or hidden shoals,
 That lie beneath the smiling treachery
 Of ocean's glassy surface! others sink—
 We wonder—yet we fear not, though the storm,
 That blasts their hopes, increases in its rage,
 And thunders against ours. Let it rage on!
 Each, self-secure, beholds its ravages
 Now here—*now there—on every side of him,*
 And rushes thoughtless—heedless on his fate.

Enter DORSET.

Dorset. “And rushes thoughtless—heedless on his fate!”

Suffolk. How now, Dorset?

Dorset. An apt conclusion to thy homily.
 And fitting our condition. Hast heard the news?

Suffolk. Heard all—my heart is full on't.

Dorset. What! that thou'rt proclaim'd
 Lord Marshal in King Cupid's expedition?
 I'faith, I'll change my shield, my valiant Duke;
 No more your couchant and your rampant Lions—
 A Heart transfixed—that's the device for Dorset.

Suffolk. I wear it ever—here within this bosom.

Dorset. Nay, nay, thou wilt relapse into a sermon.
 Wear it *outside*, for Gallic daws to peck at,
 For Gallic dames to wonder at thy faith.
 A rare commodity that needs eye-witness!
 Months have rolled round since first in bonny France
 You played the gallant to the proud Savoy,
 The merry Mag—that coquetted with kings,
 And changed the crown into a willow garland.
 And now, the gay and dashing duke of Suffolk
 Is sad and grave as a church elegy.
 Is it remorse or love that moves you thus?
 If 't be remorse—I'll take the guilt upon me
 For half the rich enjoyment that incurred it.
 If it be Love—why Margaret's gentle hand
 Shall soothe and heal her wounded cavalier.

Suffolk. Death is the great Physician.

Dorset. True, my good Lord! We'll, therefore, call him last.
 When every other hope is tried—and fails,
 Women, you must confess, are the best nurses.
 But come, my Lord, I will not cross your temper,
 We'll talk of this anon. The fleet awaits

To waft us to the sunny shores of France.
 Yet one word—Charles,
 Pray, have you ever read the Rape of Helen—
 How youthful Paris bore away the Queen
 And laid the basis of a ten years' siege?
 How times are changed! now Priam plays the lover
 And England's Helen rushes to his arms,
 While all the pride and pomp of chivalry
 Smile on the triumph of threescore and ten—
 The Rose of Spring clasped in the arms of Winter!
 The Aloe would befit his highness better—
 It blooms but once in every sixty years.

Suffolk. Dorset,—no more of this, if thou dost love me.

Dorset. What! Mary, too—Margaret will not suffice.
 Egad, my Lord, you are a mighty hunter,
 A second Nimrod among royal game.
 Might I advise to furnish out the trio,
 You'll take old Jane—the offcast Queen of Louis.

Suffolk. Dorset, I say—I've borne these ribald jests
 Beyond that point where patience is a virtue.
 Provoke my rage no longer.—'T is not meet
 That we should prattle of our inmost griefs:
 But there are depths within this wounded heart,
 Which, prob'd unskillfully, result in death
 To patient or physician.—Pray you, cease!

Dorset. What, art thou chafed?—Nay, then, my valiant friend!
 Give me thy hand.—We'll talk no more of women,
 The winds and waves shall now our topics be;
 They're not more changeful, and less perilous—
 To Dover, then, my Lord!

Suffolk. Nay, leave me, Dorset—if thou lov'st me, leave me!
 I will not fail you at the morning's dawn,
 But now 't is midnight, and my gloomy soul
 Holds her dark vigils—and would be alone.

Dorset. Ha! I perceive some haughty English dame
 Has snared brave Suffolk,—binds him in her toils.
 My Lord can't stay—my lady must not go,
 And like a starling struggling to be free,
 Though still enamoured of his silken bonds,
 He wounds the patient ear of silent night
 By sad revilings against destiny;
 In fitful mood now speaks of wounded hearts—
 Of wedded love—of absence, tears and groans.
 Confess, my Lord—I've found your cloister'd grief,
 And know its penance.

Suffolk. Well, have it as thou wilt—enjoy the fancy.

Dorset.

Far better to *enjoy* the *fancy*, Suffolk,
 Than *fancy* the *enjoyment*.—Well then, adieu,
 Farewell—I should say—but we 're half in France,
 And we must put our foreign manners on—
 Therefore *adieu*—my *loved* and *loving* lord.

Suffolk.

Good night, brave Dorset!—till the lark shall sing.

(*Exit Dorset.*)

She bade me leave her—and in future deem her
 But as a friend.—So should she think of me,
 As if the “charter'd libertine,” the mind
 Could be subdued and taught forgetfulness,
 While each repulsive lesson would revive
 Love's dear remembrance and confirm it more.
 'T is all in vain—the heart can never learn
 To throb by rule or shun what it adores.
 Friendship may swell to love and fill the soul,
 But love ne'er shrinks to friendship, till it dies.
 Extremes beget extremes and sometimes hate
 Usurps the throne of tenderness and joy,
 And riots in their ruin.—But true love
 Shudders at diminution as at death.
 Nay, it is death—the glowing heart is cold,
 Is cheerless, all its charms are lost,
 And from its former height it sinks, at once,
 To the low level of instinctive brutes.
 Hearts that have ever loved, as *we should love*,
 Will stoop to no abatement—no restraint,
 No change—no barter—but a soul for soul!
 Why cease to love—or cease to be beloved?
 The Great Creator taught the breast to glow
 With generous emotion, and to cling,
 Close as to life, to sympathetic arms.
 What is the world without it, what the glare
 Of pride and pomp—of wealth and pageantry?
 They cannot buy, vain-glorious as they are,
 The least emotion that I feel for thee.
 Who is the richer then? The wretch that hugs
 His golden store and nightly gloats upon 't,
 Or the warm spirit that shakes off its chains,
 —This clod of earth—and limitless, and pure,
 As Heaven's own ray, sheds light and transport round?

(*Exit.*)

ACT II.

SCENE I—*In France—State Apartments—Banquet.*

Francis, Duke of Valois—Duke of Vendome—Chevalier Bayard—Amarel, the Jester—Lords and Attendants, etc.

Francis. Come, fill your sparkling goblets to the brim,
I'll cast a pearl into each flowing cup,
Richer than Cleopatra's. Fill, I say;
I hold each laggard in this festive duty,
A traitor to his prince—a foe to love.

Vendome. Fear not, my Lord—for by my holidam,
This Burgundy will scarce require a bush.
The lady, though she wore an Ethiop's skin,
Were fair excuse for quaffing rosy wine.

Francis. Are you prepared—bow then before the throne
Of Royal Beauty, and unite with me
In a proud pledge to Margaret of Savoy,
By nature and by fortune, too, a queen.
I'll wear her colours on St. Deny's day,
High o'er my plume—and ill betide the Knight
Who shall dispute her proud supremacy.

Jester. How many days until the tourney, Lords?

Lord. A fortnight, fool!

Jester. Well then, my Prince, I'll stake my reputation
'Gainst your Highness'—you shall yourself dispute
The colours that you now so highly prize.

Francis. Out upon thee.—Why?

Jester. Forsooth, my Prince,
No Lady ever held you in her chains
For half a fortnight—wear her colours, truly.
If thou wilt wear the colours of *thy* love,
Borrow some rainbow pattern, good my Lord,
That in thy changing purpose may afford
Some tint to swear by—or let the ladies wear
Prismatic glasses, that all may claim you
With some hue of reason.

Francis. Would you have stars or liquid diamonds gaze
On her bright eyes—which light the way to joy.
Pearl—call to mind the treasure of that mouth;
Coral—behold her lip—but, oh! beware
You linger not amidst the sweet enchantment—
This labyrinth of love!—No clue can save you.

Bayard. Your Highness shall not want for love or prowess ;
 Hither as I came to share your banquet,
 I met De Longueville in anxious haste.
 The marriage 't wixt our gracious sovereign
 And courtly Mary has been ratified,
 And all the flower of English Chivalry
 Waits on the princess and her beauteous train.

Vendome. Nay more, my Lord—the rumour further goes—
 So rapidly heart travels towards heart—
 'The expedition hourly is expected ;—
 Fame speaks most loudly of the princess' charms.

Francis. Now, by immortal Charlemagne, I swear—
 This is worth half my hopes of kingly honour.

Jester. If it be worth but *half*—'t is dearly purchased—
 For it may cost you *all*.

Francis. Peace, Raven—
 What names of note adorn this expedition ?

Bayard. A thousand knights, my Lord, attend the queen,
 And ladies numberless. The Duke of Suffolk,
 Lord Marquis Dorset—Howard, Duke of Norfolk,
 Young Harry Percy, and my Lord of Surry.

Francis. Say no more, Bayard—thou hast filled the measure
 Of my ambition. Suffolk and brave Dorset,
 Those youthful gallants, who astonished France,
 And bore away the prize from every tournay.
 Let me not prove a boaster, my good lords ;
 But, by my hopes of fame, I'd share the throne
 To clasp them rudely in a soldier's arms—
 They come to try our golden spurs again.
 When does the King receive his blushing bride
 And her fair train ?

Vendome. Forthwith, my Lord, on her arrival here.
 De Longueville is closeted with him—
 We may expect prompt orders.

Enter CHAMBERLAIN.

Francis. Look, they come !
 Well, to thy mission.

Chamberlain. My Lord Valois, his highness bade me greet you
 With the fair tidings of the Queen's approach.
 His further pleasure shall this mandate shew.

Francis. (*perusing mandate*) To horse, my friends ! the princess has arrived,
 And the King's warrant delegates to us
 The proud protection of her royal person.
 By heaven ! I long to bask in those bright eyes—
 Terrestrial cynosures of hope and joy.

- Jester.* Look to the wager, Lord. Methinks your colours
Begin to change—they'll scarcely stand the journey.
- Francis.* Oh, Alexander! what a soul was thine!
That in the prime of manhood and of love—
Deck'd with a thousand triumphs—could resist
The matchless Persian beauty—bright Statira.
- Bayard.* Why not *Scipio*, my good Lord?
- Francis.* I could restore ten captives to their lovers,
Unless, forsooth, I were the captives' captive;
But never yet had power to shun the glance
Of two bright eyes, that fame had trumpeted,
Until I first had seen them, and compared
With brighter eyes, and cured my love with love.
The Greek resisting curiosity—resisted two Statiras;
The Roman saw—was satisfied and just.
Let us improve this lesson in our saddle.
To horse, brave knights! 't is beauty points the way.

Exeunt.

SCENE II—*Boulogne.*

Enter SUFFOLK and DORSET.

- Suffolk.* How far to Abbeville, my Lord?
- Dorset.* Some twenty leagues.
Now answer me *one* question.
- Suffolk.* Aye, if my humble stock of knowledge, Dorset,
Will serve thy bidding.
- Dorset.* Well, then, my Lord Duke, I am like a traveller, who never
looks at his passport until his *journey* is arrested, or, perhaps,
until he is himself arrested. Or, rather, I am like an unskilful
navigator who runs upon a rock before he examines his chart—
a nautical simile which I am sure you will appreciate, as we
have just now so narrowly escaped drowning. The fate of
some hanging rogue in the crew alone saved us.
- Suffolk.* But, to the question.
- Dorset.* Well, then, most potent sir, is this a wedding ceremony or a
death ceremony we are here upon? That it is of most *grave* im-
port is manifest. In plain *English*, considering we are at last
in *France*, are you *chief marshal* or *chief mourner* here.
- Suffolk.* *Both*, my good Lord.
- Dorset.* In other words, then—is the Princess to be *married*, or is she
to be *buried*.
- Suffolk.* *Both*, my Lord.
- Dorset.* Well, but which is to take place *first*, Suffolk—for I am un-
willing to be merry or sad out of time.
- Suffolk.* Neither, Dorset—they'll be cotemporary.

Dorset.

That's unlucky. I can be as sad as a tombstone at one moment, and as gay as a fiddle at another. But by Thomas Aquinas, I never could play at tragedy and comedy at one and the same time. My muscles are so sympathetic, that when I laugh on one side of the mouth I am certain to do it on the other—and I never drop a tear from one eye but that from the other forthwith issues its companion. I am sure, therefore, with me nature never intended any mutuality between mirth and melancholy. Could you not contrive to give either death or marriage precedency for the special accommodation of an old friend—or do you consider them the *same*?

Suffolk.

How should it be
 When Youth's consigned to the embrace of Time,
 When life is fettered in the arms of Death?
 Canst read the human face, and not perceive
 How fate lies lurking in the wreathed smile.
 Decrepid age, corruption and decay
 Prey on the vernal cheek, and blight its bloom.
 I tell thee, Dorset—for my grief will speak—
 The temple, where this union is confirmed,
 Should be a sepulchre—a charnal house—
 And bridal robes and jewels and parade
 Give place to sackcloth, shrouds and tears of blood.

Dorset.

Tut, man—think not so deeply of this revelry;
 Kings will be kings—and maids have fickle fancies.
 A hundred thousand crowns will be the dowry,
 An annual stipend of an equal sum,
 From France to England, keeps the balance even.
 Gold is an equipoise to youth and beauty
 In Harry's eyes—Midas is always young.

Suffolk.

The feeblest impulse that affection prompts,
 Is worth a kingdom.—Kingdoms cannot buy it;
 It springs spontaneous in the human heart,
 Unbrib'd—unfetter'd—precious as the blood
 That thrills in circling eddies through the vein—
 Offspring and guardian of life's citadel—
 Millions of tribute which the unwilling hand
 Pays, while the soul withholds its sympathy
 Or shrinks from the exaction; what are they
 But dull and slavish homage from a slave,
 Giving what fear forbids him to refuse,
 Or power resistless ever may enforce?
 What mutuality can this bespeak
 Beyond external seeming?—the base traffic
 Of sordid worldlings—wedded to themselves—
 Giving to take—or yielding to receive!

Dorset.

Suffolk, forbear—nor preach me into love.
 What shall be done?—I'll marry her myself—
 My fair proportions shall her dowry be;

Young and well favour'd,—such is my repute,
 I'll match me 'gainst King Louis at the worst,
 And laugh his *crown* to scorn.—But, my Lord Charles,
 I cannot match—the *hundred thousand crowns* :
 There I cry craven—and renounce the fight—
 Nay, if the gold were mine, this stately figure
 Would scarcely answer—rendered a head shorter.
 To stake my coin—my heart—my head together,
 Were downright madness in this game of love.

Suffolk. Dorset, forbear.—The princess moves this way.

Dorset. Then would I rather move some *other* way.
 For by St. Paul—I'm chilled with my own fancy—
 And like poor Damocles, methinks I see
 A sword suspended by a single hair
 Over my prostrate neck.

Enter PRINCESS MARY, attended by NORFOLK, NORTHUMBERLAND, and Maids of Honour.

Princess Mary. Fate, my Lords,
 Thus far upon our journey, looks propitious.—
 (*Aside.*) A cloudless morning to a darksome day.—
 Have you despatched a Courier to the King
 To note our progress ?

Suffolk. We have, most gracious Madam.

Princess Mary. My Lord of Norfolk, 't is to your discretion—
 Your science in the forms of Foreign Courts,
 These matters are confided.—Though a princess,
 I boast nor art nor skill in State concerns.

Enter MESSENGER.

Princess Mary. Well, gentle Sir—what bodes this anxious haste ?

Messenger. Most gracious Lady,
 Commission'd by the King—the pride of France,
 Led by the Duke Valois, have come to greet you,
 And crave an audience.

Dorset. The *Pride of France* must rival Xerxes' hosts.
 (*Aside to Suffolk.*)

Princess Mary. 'T is somewhat sudden—but admit the Knights.

Dorset. So courtly Francis leads the van in love—
 The greater pride commands the pride of France—
 The King would wed by proxy.—The rival Knight
 That tilts for love with Francis of Valois,
 Must grow into his saddle, and prove centaur—
 Or, by the Rood, the Frenchman will unhorse him—
 Dost know this Madcap ? (*Aside to Suffolk.*)

Suffolk. Aye—but shall know him better.—See, he comes !

Enter FRANCIS, BAYARD, VENDOME, and others.

Francis. Your Highness' pardon,
But that the freshness of our loyal duty
O'erleaps the weak restraints of courtesy—
We were obtrusive in this eager haste;
Our love must be our warrant.

Princess Mary. My good kinsman, we are bounden to you
And those brave lords, in grateful memory,
For this prompt service—please you to make known
To my Lord Norfolk, whom we here present,
The Royal will.

Francis. Your Highness *knows* it, Madam—'t is your will;
You are the Sovereign's Sovereign—we your slaves.

Princess Mary. Nay, my good Lord—or, an' you'll have it so,
It is my will that these our trusty friends
Adjust this expedition.

Francis. A Child of France ne'er parleys with his queen—
We bow to *your* decree.

Princess Mary. Again accept my homage, my good Knights,
For your kind service—Suffolk and Dorset,
We commit our friends, during our sojourn,
To your special care;
Bestow them as their merit shall deserve—
They need no prouder welcome.—How fares the King?

Francis. As one must fare, on whom your Highness smiles.

Princess Mary. When left you Abbeville?

Francis. Some few hours since, good Madam.

Princess Mary. By that token, you have had a weary ride.

Francis. Not so, your Highness;
In France we measure journeys by the object.
The globe, outstretched between the soul and its desires,
Were shorter than the tiresome tedious league
That turns the back on joy.

Princess Mary. Gentle Cousin,
Though maiden modesty would shun this praise,
We will not feign to misconceive your favour,
And thereby strain your courtesy still further.
You do us too much honour. Come, my lords,
Let me present you to our British dames,
And thus reward, if not repay your toil.

Exeunt Princess, Francis, Norfolk and Attendants.

Dorset. By Cupid, my good lord, this potent Prince,
Bears himself proudly. 'T is a dangerous envoy
In love's concerns. There are no Alexanders

But there may be Campaspes in *our* train.
 I'faith, I long'd, while boasting of his riding,
 To say he learnt it at the field of spurs.
 Will you to the banquet? or shall he sway
 An undivided sceptre.

Suffolk. He is a noble and right valiant prince.

Dorset. Didst mark with what a grace he seiz'd her hand,
 While his hawk eye traversed her beauty o'er?

Suffolk. Who can behold her, and forbear to love?

Dorset. Who dares to love, yet dares not show his love
 To the dear object that inspires it,
 Says she's a queen—in *love* she is a subject—
 The crown begirts her head, but not her heart—
 The heart's a woman's throne—'t is there she reigns—
 'T is there she rules—is ruled, and must be won—
 Despair not then, brave Duke—bestir yourself:
 Here is a rival worthy of your arm—
 Will you stand tamely by, and yield the prize
 At the first onset? Shake your sorrows off—
 I've known you foil a dozen lords like this
 With their own weapons, and on their own soil;
 Courage, then—to the rescue!—*en avant!*

Suffolk. Fear nothing, Dorset, I'll maintain my post.

Dorset. Yes, *like a post*—maintain it like Lord Suffolk—
 The gay—the gallant, and victorious Suffolk:
 Not as a monk with cowl and cross and beads—
 Why man, you are as pale as Mistress Boleyn.
 When we were stranded on the Gallic shores,
 And your lack lustre eyes prey on the earth,
 As though they sought the refuge of a grave.
 This foolish passion is the bane of honour.

Suffolk. My Lord I thank you—you have struck a chord
 Within this tortur'd breast, that wakes the soul—
 I'll be myself, although my life-strings crack.

Dorset. Well said, my friend—France trembled in that look.
 Stand to your arms, and be as you were wont—
 I'll wage my title to an infant's rattle,
 We'll foil those Mounseers yet.—Now to the Banquet—
 I'll play Patroclus—you shall be Achilles.

Exeunt.

SCENE III.—*Banqueting Room—A Dance.*

PRINCESS MARY—DUKE OF VALOIS—VENDOME—BAYARD—PERCY—ANNE BOLEYN—*Maids of Honour, and Attendants.*

Francis. Who is yon fair Titania?

Princess Mary. Young Mistress Boleyn.

Francis. And the noble youth, who hangs upon her speech—
Pymalion like—in love with his own work?

Princess Mary. Lord Harry Percy, of Northumberland.

Enter SUFFOLK and DORSET.

Princess Mary. My Lord of Suffolk, you forget your charge—
We must remind you.

Suffolk. Which charge, my princess?
The King, your brother, placed you in my care—
That charge I well remember—if forgot
All other duties—this must be my plea.

Bayard. Well answered, Madam—
You must be merciful, when you yourself
Stand the excuse for error. The brave duke
Were much to blame, if, in regard to us,
He overlook the fealty that he owes
To fairer claims. What says my Lord Valois?

Francis. I say acquitted.—He who sins for woman,
Builds upon Adam and prescriptive right.

Suffolk. Your pardon, noble Lords—your Highness' pardon—
I nor admit the crime nor the excuse;
My first of duties, as a faithful subject,
Is reverence to the Princess; this embraces
Submission to her will—and 't is her will,
Nay, too, it is my pride, my gallant Lords,
Not in obsequious service to your titles,
But as the guerdon of your proud exploits,
To greet you with the homage of my love.

Francis. Thanks, gentle sir. We only crave the boon
To supersede you in the guardianship
Of your fair ward. You are absolved from ours.
Fair lady shall it be?

Princess Mary. We yield to your disposal, noble Cousin—
The laws of France must govern.

Francis. Your pleasure is my law, most gracious Madam—
When, and wherever known.

Princess Mary. Affairs thus settled.—When shall we depart?

Francis. Might I advise—the dawning of to-morrow
Shall see us on our journey—th' expectant King,
If of my mind, will scarcely brook delay.

Princess Mary. To-morrow, let it be. Meantime, my Lord,
We now commend you to a good repose.

(Exit, with her train.)

Bayard. What now, my Lord?—You seem to stand amaz'd.

Francis. Amazed—confounded—blinded with the blaze
Of concentrated beauty.—'T is gone, and all is darkness.

Bayard. Your thoughts still doat upon the proud Savoy.

Francis. As trav'lers doat upon the gloomy night,
When the last ray of the descending sun
Tinges the West to dawn in other worlds;
Didst mark her, Bayard, midst the beauteous throng—
How she shone forth in bright pre-eminence,
Eclipsing all their charms?

Bayard. Mark whom, my prince?

Francis. Mark whom!—Whom should you mark
In the whole world's wide circle but the Queen?—
Par excellence—the Queen!

Bayard. My Lord—the King!

Francis. Aye, Bayard—well remembered;
Mistake me not—I would not play the traitor
To my great benefactor, for the worth
Of woman-kind.—But, Bayard, she's an angel.

Bayard. So let her e'er remain for *you*, my Lord—
She is the King's betrothed.—Her youth—her charms—
Enough to warm an anchorite to love,
Opposed to knightly honour and renown,
Fade like the phantoms of distempered minds
At the return of reason. Valiant Sir
Pause not to weigh your princely dignity
Against a woman's smile—or both are lost.

Francis. *Sans peur et sans reproche*—How just a tribute
To thy exalted fame. My gallant friend,
If royalty derived its stamp from nature,
Or worth inherent challenged for itself
The rev'rence and submission which we pay
To worth presumptive—or if regal power,
The right to sway the destiny of others,
Sprung only from a conquest o'er ourselves,
Thou wert a native monarch. Come, my Lord,
You must forgive the recklessness of youth—
Which time and your example shall reform.

Bayard. Faults self reprieved are more than half atoned,
And prompt repentance does the work of mercy.
We'll spæak of it no more. Adieu, my Lord,
At the grey dawn, you'll find me in the saddle. (*Exit.*)

Francis. Meantime, sweet rest attend you.
Now guardian saints encompass me about,
Quell my rebellious blood—subdue my thoughts,
And teach the wayward spirit to avoid
The lures of love—and tread the path of honour. (*Exit.*)

ACT III.

SCENE I—*State Apartments at Abbeville.**Enter LOUIS XII. and DE LONGUEVILLE.*

- King Louis.* Most true, my faithful counsellor and friend,
Her beauty is as royal as her birth.
But still, my Lord, although the glowing charms
Of gay sixteen attract the roving eye,
The deep devotion of this widow'd heart
Is due to worth alone. Oh, sainted Ann!
- De Dongueville.* Most gracious sire! dwell not upon your griefs,
But bury them in joy. This smiling realm,
Emerging from the scenes of blood and strife,
Shall bless the royal sacrifice that gives
Peaceful content to all.
- King Louis.* Were there no other sacrifice, my Lord,
Than that to which I'm doom'd, by th' blest shade
Of th' departed, it were freely rendered.
Can you behold the queen, and not perceive
This is a bond of hands and not of hearts.
Is it then generous--nay, is it just,
That doting age, forgetful of the tomb,
Should thus stretch forth its sickly, palsied hand,
To crop the bloom of youth and blight her joys
Beyond all hope of a reviving spring.
- De Longueville.* Her royal brother gave her to your arms.
- King Louis.* But, should we plead the royal brother's gift
To the destruction of the sister's hope?
Can I receive from policy's constraint,
To soothe the jarring feuds of hostile realms
An uncomplaining but reluctant bride.
We say reluctant—Can it be denied,
I place a crown of thorns upon her head,
And like a flower upon the blasted heath,
She withers, pines and dies.
- De Longueville.* Ambition shall supply the place of love.
What prouder title than—a queen of France?
- King Louis.* She shall be queen, my Lord—she shall be queen,
For honour and our plighted word demand it:
But no perdition that my sinful life
Could doom me to hereafter, could appal me
Like the deep curse, that springs from blasted youth.
Mark then, my Lord! let ev'ry charm attend her,
That grateful France can lavish on her sov'reign;

She is my daughter and a maiden queen—
 I'll guard her as a father.—Still, my Lord,
 How little fitted are lascivious courts
 For such a charge—how imminent the peril!
 See that some choice attendants wait upon,
 Of her selection—we confide in thee.

De Longueville. Your will shall be obeyed, most gracious sir. (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE II—*Palace Garden.*

Enter PRINCESS MARY.

Princess Mary. The glare of day—the grosser glare of pomp
 Are past, and now the noon of night prevails.
 Distracted and excursive thoughts return,
 Freight with good or ill, and cast their load
 Of joy or grief on the expectant heart;
 And still how sweet—how beautiful is night!
 How mild yet how luxuriant are the rays
 Which beam from yon cerulean monarchy—
 Pale Cynthia and all her starry train,
 O'er a tempestuous world, lull'd to repose—
 Transient, short-liv'd repose! To-morrow's dawn
 Shall wake the slumberers and renew their toil.
 What foot obtrusive breaks upon my thoughts?
 —Ha! Valois here.

Enter FRANCIS.

Francis. Alone, fair Madam—wrapt in contemplation
 Of the bright hosts above.—Should they look down
 And see those beauteous orbs upturn'd to heav'n,
 They will desert their spheres to be outvied.

Princess Mary. In the wide circle of your qualities—
 Do you embrace astronomy, my Lord?

Francis. The only stars I ever studied, Lady,
 Are those bright eyes.—Nay, do not turn them from me.

Princess Mary. My Lord—my Lord,
 Duly respective of your royal birth
 And your proud promise, I have patient borne
 With the wild raptures of a wanton tongue,
 Nor check'd its license.—But thrice valiant prince,
 It nor becomes my station as a queen
 Nor matron modesty—no, nor my duty,
 To listen to the voice of adulation.

Francis. Bid me be dumb: but let me gaze upon thee,
 Till the fraught soul shall surfeit on thy charms.

Princess Mary. Beware! Beware, young Lord! this reckless freedom
 Comports not with the honour of thy name.

Shall brave Valois, the pride and stay of France,
Waste all his glory on a fruitless passion,
And turn a rebel to the best of Kings?

Francis. O, frown not thus!—say I should sacrifice
Hope's fairest visions, and abjure my fame;
Thy love were rich equivalent for all.
Proud as I am, behold me at thy feet,
An humble suppliant.—Grant but one smile!

Princess Mary. No more, my Lord!—Is this the gallant prince
Who steals on an unguarded, helpless woman,
To wound her ear, and stain the modest cheek
With base professions of unholy love?
My Lord—my Lord—am I the Queen of France?

Francis. The queen of Queens—the sov'reign of all hearts;
Forgive me, Madam, I'll no more offend.

Princess Mary. I do forgive, upon that sole condition.

Francis. Then let me seal the compact on this hand.

Princess Mary. O, shame to knighthood!—Sir, release your hold,
Lest I alarm the guard.—Where and who am I?
Are these the sacred precincts of the palace;
Or has my fancy, straying from the truth,
Led me into some desert drear and wild—
Some lawless haunt, where ruffian robbers lurk
To prey on the defenceless?—Leave me, sir.

Enter SUFFOLK.

Suffolk. My Lord Valois.

Francis. Aye, my right valiant Duke—you are the guard.
I see, fair Madam, you are well attended,
As suits your royal state.—The Queen of France,
Distrustful of the valour of her subjects,
Rests on the prowess of an English Knight.
—To-morrow's tourney shall requite your zeal.

Suffolk. Where'er my loyal duty shall direct me,
I shall be found.—I neither seek nor shun
The mark'd distinction that your threat implies;
Unworthy as I am, methinks, my Lord,
'T were fitter that your grace should cope with me
In open war, than steal your laurels *thus*.

Francis. I'll waste no words upon thee—prove thy valour. (*Draws.*)

Suffolk. Put up your weapon till the time shall serve.
This is no scene for blood. Valour that needs
The tongue's loud flourish, and a lady's eye,
May well be doubted, though I doubt not yours;
Your courage, sir, will keep.—So let us part.

How we again shall meet—how part when met,
Let time and fate determine.

Francis.

So let it be;

Till then, we're friends—remember *but* till then. (*Exit.*)

Princess Mary.

O, Suffolk, what a wretched lot is mine!—
All who cling to me wither and decay!

Suffolk.

Fear nothing, Madam, I am ever near,
And while this sword can guard this throbbing breast,
No harm shall come to thee.—Will you not trust me?

Princess Mary.

Aye, with my life; nay more, my Lord, my honour—
The honour of a Queen—but valiant Suffolk
Avoid the list to-morrow—the vengeful threats
Of the young prince denote a fatal purpose.

Suffolk.

What *then*, fair Madam, but a forfeit life
Which none will take more freely than I give—
What is it, but a burthen to be borne,
From day to day, till death removes the load?
I would not wound thy ear with my fell thoughts,
But still, that hand, were dearest next thine own,
That cuts the tenure of my weary hours,
And soothes me to a long and last repose,
—Who would mourn Suffolk?

Princess Mary.

Let these tears answer—these reluctant tears,
Wrung from a Queen's, yet still a woman's heart:
Would'st thou desert me in my utmost need,
While the storm rages, and conspiring fates
Pour their whole quiver on me?

Suffolk.

What! shall I prove a recreant to my King?—
A recreant too, to thee, for hated life!
Shrink from the list, and see the vaunting Prince
Mount on my fallen crest to the vast height
Of his ambition, while exulting France,
Hails the proud victor with her thousand hands,
And brands me as a coward!—No, my Princess,
The honours that I wear were dearly won,
By nights of toil—by days of peril past;
And he that tears the garland from *my* brow,
To deck his *own*, shall leave these temples cold,
And rend his trophies from the grasp of death.

Princess Mary.

Pardon this anxious heart, that in thy danger
Saw nought beside—o'erlook'd all sacrifice:
If it *must* be, remember in the hour
Of doubtful conflict—shall I breathe it, Suffolk,
Two lives rest on thy sword!

(*Exit.*)

Suffolk.

Am I awake?

—Was the Queen here, e'en now?—Was it her voice

That bade me guard my life—*her* life in mine!
 Or do I dream of those delusive joys
 That reason shall dispel?—It is no dream—
 She loves me still; in that one precious thought,
 A tide of transport rushes o'er the soul.

SCENE III—*The Same.**Enter* DORSET *to* SUFFOLK.

Dorset. How! Is this Suffolk?

Suffolk. Certes, my brave Sir.

Dorset. What! musing on th' cold inconstant moon,
 The pale coquette that sails through wond'ring stars,
 Like earth-born planets in the giddy dance,
 Smiling on all, and changing while she smiles!
 —The midnight bell has toll'd an hour ago.

Suffolk. Ha, reveller! and dost thou scoff at me?
 Pray, by what *bell*, my Lord, have you kept time,
 That thus unheeded hours should wing their flight,
 And morning should surprise you?

Dorset. By what *belle*? the sweetest *belle* in France,
 That chim'd in endless pleasure.—Two such eyes!

Suffolk. Nay, pause there, Dorset, were there surely *two*?

Dorset. Two, as I live; two dark and beaming eyes,
 Two rosy lips, and, what is still more rare,
 Two tongues, my Lord, one English and one French!

Suffolk. I cry you mercy! you have solved the riddle:
 The ladies' tongues out-tongued the tongue of time,
 And drown'd the Abbey clock.—A fair excuse!

Dorset. Divinely fair!—so soft—so languishing!

Suffolk. When met you with this paragon of charms?

Dorset. This blessed morning, at the Coronation.
 While you stood drooping 'mid the gorgeous crowd,
 And gay Valois bedeck'd the kneeling Queen
 With the resplendent crown,—peering from a group
 Of dazzling beauty, those two self-same eyes,
 Despite of buckler guard and coat of mail,
 Transfix'd my heart.

Suffolk. What is the lady's title?

Dorset.

Woman!—No other title could bespeak

Her worth.

Suffolk. But of what family?

Dorset. Celestial beings have no family.
She is herself alone.

Suffolk. Still, of what lineage?

Dorset. What lineage has yon fair and radiant star,
That bears the stamp of an immortal hand?
What orbit does it move in but its own?
It shines in its own pure and pristine light:—
Not like your fav'rite moon in borrow'd beams!

Suffolk. Well, Dorset! but her name?

Dorset. What matters that?—
I never took a *name* for a fair lady,
Nor will I take a lady for her *name*;
I was not at the christening, and, in short,
I know not—care not; and might I prevail,
By her sweet leave, I'd change her name to-morrow.
What do you call that star?

Suffolk. Venus, my Lord.

Dorset. Well, call *her* Venus, if you will have names;
Though, call that star by any name you may,
It beams with equal splendour; so with *her*,
With, or without a name, she is——

Suffolk. What?

Dorset. A woman!—
Light of my eyes, and treasure of my soul!

Suffolk. Pray, leave these raptures—listen to a friend.

Dorset. Not I, you will convert my joy to sadness;
Your love and mine can never sympathize;—
Mine is as buoyant as the breath of morn,
And yours as moping as a cheerless night.

Suffolk. But still, in friendship, we can sympathize;
There we are sure responsive.—Come, reveal;
—What! how now, Dorset!—blood upon thy brow!

Dorset. Scratched by a lap-dog. Why do you gaze thus?
Is not the blood-stained Mars a meet companion
For the soft, fresh, bewitching queen of love?

Suffolk. Nay, sport no more.—You wrong our sacred friendship
By this distrust: for weary—anxious years,
In camps—in courts—in grief and merriment,
We have been more than brothers: tell me, then,
What good or evil has befallen thee,
That I may share the one—redress the other!

Dorset. Redress my wounds, if thou art surgical,

But do not talk of *shares*, or I am mute;
 I'll share with thee e'en to the dregs of hope—
 Share title, fortune, honour—all with thee:
 But to the tithe part of her finger nail,
 I claim her undivided as mine own.

Suffolk. So let her ever be; I would not stint
 The measure of thy love to sway a sceptre,
 But do not thus withhold the story from me.

Dorset. Thus, then, it runs;—the gorgeous pageant past,
 I sought the beauteous dame;—I sought and found her
 Radiant in youth, encircled round by knights,
 Mounted upon a milk-white Arab steed,
 That curvetted with pride. Forcing my way
 Through the adoring throng, to catch her accents,
 Which dropped like manna on the famish'd soul,
 E'en then, the shrill notes of the royal trumpet
 Alarm'd the steed—he plung'd—he rear'd—he fell!
 And, as he fell, I seiz'd the trembling maid,
 While all around stood paralyzed with horror,
 And bore her, fainting, to a place of safety.

Suffolk. Perform'd like Dorset—but the sequel, haste.

Dorset. A neighbouring castle open'd to receive her;
 Where terror soon subsided. All unknown,
 There I remained, attendant on her couch,
 Midst weeping dames and sympathetic lords,
 Till, opening those mild, languid, lovely eyes,
 She ask'd for her preserver;—at her side,
 Kneeling, I kiss'd her pallid, passive hand,
 And vow'd myself her slave; e'en at the word,
 She placed this glittering chain around my neck,
 And with her own soft fingers, bandaged thus
 My bleeding brows, with a transparent veil,
 Torn from her raven tresses.

Suffolk. How came the wound, my friend?

Dorset. In truth, I know not:
 'Tis scarce a scar, that any eyes but love's
 Could readily discover—a slight blow
 Struck by the horse's hoof.—*Here* is the wound,
 The cureless wound, that seals the fate of Dorset.

Suffolk. What! art thou melancholy?

Dorset. But for a moment: a passing cloud of melancholy brightens
 our joys; sadness is but the resting place of our winged plea-
 sure, while preparing or repairing for a renewed flight. To-
 morrow, at the tournament, I'll wear this trophy in my
 burgonet.

Suffolk. Thou dost not know the lady!—knows she thee?

Dorset.

Why, in my person, yes: and, as a knight,
Tho' plainly thus attired, she needs must know me:
The soul's above disguise.—But, as Lord Dorset, no!

Suffolk.

Thy noble nature cannot be concealed:
It breathes in every word—speaks in each thought.

Dorset.

Nay, pause there, Charles, nor thus deceive yourself—
Tinsel and trappings still have virtue in them,—
A cloak of frieze would cover twenty lords;
—But come, brave Sir, the day begins to break;
Let us consult our pillows, and be wise.

Exeunt.

ACT IV.

SCENE I—*Castle Hall.*

Enter STELLA, (Duchess of Montmorenci,) CHARMEAN her Attendant.

Duchess. Subdued at last, ensnar'd in one short hour:
 Won, though unsought—so often sought unwon.
 O, love, mysterious and capricious love,
 Though scorn'd so long, at length thou art reveng'd
 On my poor heart! (*Rings the bell.*)

Enter CHARMEAN.

Duchess. Hast thou yet learnt the gallant stranger's name?

Charmean. Madam, obedient to my Lady's will,
 I sought him through the Court, but still in vain:
 But, from my hasty and imperfect glance,
 As he departed, I could e'en be sworn
 He is a gentleman.

Duchess. Whate'er he be,
 So near akin is gratitude to love,
 That with my life—I'd pay him for my life.

Charmean. A grateful heart is always bountiful;
 It must be, when it gives away itself!
 What if the stranger prove a low born peasant,
 Devoid alike of title, fame, and fortune—
 Shall the proud mistress of a coronet
 Ally herself to beggary and shame?

Duchess. Shame never dared to sit upon that brow;
 'Tis honour's throne.—Didst mark amid the throng
 Of Lords and Nobles, how supreme he stood—
 Blanchless and dauntless, while his eagle eye
 Surveyed, undazzled, all the glare of pomp,
 As matters most familiar.—What to him
 Who wears great nature's patent in his breast,
 Are all the tinsell'd trappings of a Court?

Charmean. But why conceal his name or his degree?

Duchess. Think'st thou I love the name or the degree!
 Nay, 't is himself.—Were he ten times a lord—
 Could his redoubled titles more than vouch
 His innate worth,—th' consciousness of virtue
 Shrinks from external proofs, and rests alone

And rests secure upon approving Heaven,
Without whose smile a diadem is dross,
And priceless jewels glitter to betray.

Charmean. Still, should he prove plebeian in his birth?

Duchess. Pray Heav'n he may;—the lower his descent,
The higher his desert.—Thus to emerge
From the dark, struggling, adverse clouds of fate,
Like the bright sun from a tempestuous sky,
Or the dark bosom of the stormy main,
All radiant and majestic in his glory,
How much more godlike, than when rosy hours
And gentle fanning zephyrs cling around
His golden chariot, and enamour'd shed
Their fragrant incense o'er its burnish'd track!
I tell thee, Charmean, forty thousand lords,
Fair weather lords, in their united worth,
Were not the tithe of nature's nobleman!
If thou wouldst bind thy mistress ever to thee,
Devise some means consistent with my fame,
To win this truant back.

Charmean. To-morrow is the tournament, my Lady,
When, if the stranger be of noble blood,
Or knightly bearing, nay, whate'er he be,
You shall discover him.

Duchess. True, my good Charmean, at the parting moment,
I threw a golden chain around his neck,
Which, if he owe me half the love I bear,
Will mark him as the object of my search;
Still, should this fail, there is a sympathy
Stronger than chains, that draws and binds me to him.
Prepare thou then, forthwith—we will begone;
If he be there, whatever his disguise,
This faithful heart shall find him.

Exeunt.

SCENE II—*Room in the Palace.*

Enter DORSET.

Dorset. By Cupid, I'm undone!—Dorset's no more!
I've run the gauntlet of a thousand eyes
Unscathed—unhurt; and now, to perish thus
By one fair sorc'ress, and a single glance:—
'T is the contagion of vile company!
—Here Suffolk breathes his soul away in sighs
For the reversion of the beauteous Queen;
—There Percy wails and pines the livelong night,
In pensive sonnets to fair Mistress Anne:

While gay Valois, with troops of troubadours,
 Infects the realm with all-pervading love,
 As with a foul, unsparing pestilence.
 The *Devil*, too, must add his pranks to theirs,
 And, in the shape of that white Arab steed,
 Transfer a lovely burthen to my arms,
 To mar my peace forever.

Enter FRANCIS.

- Francis.* How now, brave Marquis!—a philosopher!
 Wrapt and absorb'd in thought!
- Dorset.* Most true, your Grace,
 I am engaged in solving of a riddle,
 Would puzzle Solon and his wise compeers;
 —Pray, what is love?
- Francis.* What all men feel—what no man understands;—
 Folly of the wise, and wisdom of the fool;—
 The coward's solace;—the brave man's reward;—
 Wealth of the poor, and poverty of wealth.
- Dorset.* Canst thou prescribe its remedy, my Lord?
- Francis.* Poison is cured by poison—love by love;
 If thou wilt teach me to retain the passion,
 I'll teach thee to subdue it.
- Dorset.* Well, proceed.
- Francis.* Nay, to thy lesson first.
- Dorset.* Thus, then, it runs:—
 Wouldst thou faithful be in love,
 And its rich enjoyment prove,
 Scorn the treach'rous lures of art,
 Seek for beauty in the heart;
 Outward charms shall early fade,
 Time the fairest brow invade:
 Virtue only can supply
 Beauty that shall never die.
- Francis.* Nay, my Lord, he must be a redoubtable knight that will
 enter the lists against love, poetry and virtue.—A poetical lover
 is beyond all human relief.—Thy case is hopeless.—Thy love
 is like the Lernæan hydra: it has a hundred heads.—I engaged
 merely to encounter the rosy cheek Cupid, with his bow and
 quiver.—If you are for monsters, my Lord, I decline the combat.
 —Who is the saint of your idolatry—Her name?
- Dorset.* That is another branch of the problem that I have yet to
 learn; perhaps your Highness can assist me there,—for, in
 truth, my Lord, if she be not found, I am lost.

Francis.

And if she be found you are not the less lost.

Dorset.

But, my Lord Duke, you have not redeemed your pledge; whether your remedy be infallible or not, I am still entitled to the benefit of the instruction: a touch of royalty is said to be a medicament in cases of King's Evil; it is a *sovereign* cure at least. Now, my Lord, to your muse.

Francis.

I am much more at home with the graces, good Dorset. Nevertheless, as fits of sudden love, like other suddeu disasters, are the frequent result of the mercurial temperament of the times, like a prudent Leech, I am generally prepared with an abundant stock of recipes, and will supply you with one at random from my budget. If there should be more physic than poetry in it, though it may be less palatable, it will still be better adapted to your condition, than if it contained more poetry than physic. It was a dose prepared for myself, but the occasion having gone by, it is heartily at your service; it may not prove wholly inefficacious, though hastily compounded.

Love, thou fickle, fond deceiver,

All thy shafts are sped in vain:

I defy thy empty quiver,

And triumph in thy pain!

Hope not then to conquer me:

Wings alone are left to thee;

Hie thee to the Paphian grove:

I disdain thy malice, Love!

All thy wiles are known to me:

I despise thy witchery!

Dorset.

Bravely done, my Lord, if you can but maintain it! Pray proceed.

Francis.

Whosoe'er would vanquish Love,

First must bow beneath his sway:

All his wayward arts must prove:

All his stern decrees obey;

Till, in some auspicious hour,

Vainly dreaming of his power,

While he self-secure reposes,

Listless on his bed of roses:

Seize the faithless, false deceiver,

Strip him of his bow and quiver:

Bind him in his silken toils,

Crush him with his wanton spoils;

With relentless fury fraught,

Practise all the ills he taught.

Dorset.

But suppose he should never sleep, my Lord, but should be continually sighing and weeping, and billing and cooling—What then?

Francis.

List not to his melting sighs,

Pause not on his ruby lip,

Glance not on his streaming eyes,
 Nor Hyblæan accents sip.
 Toy not with his sunny hair:
 Ev'ry ringlet is a snare.
 Pierce him with his fatal dart,
 Reckless, thoughtless of the smart;
 Blind, unarm'd, without a pinion—
 Banish the delusive minion;
 Thus—thus only shalt thou rest,
 Blessing, and forever blest!

Dorset. Admirable theory, my Lord!—It was my theory yesterday.
 There is but one objection to it.

Francis. Pray, what is that?

Dorset. It is not practicable: I can't swallow the prescription; I have full confidence in the experience of the Doctor, yet the nostrum is more odious than the disease. I cannot find it *in my* stomach—alias my heart—to adopt your course of regimen!

Francis. Then you may dismiss the physician: for your case is incurable. But come, to be serious, I'll prove your friend; I've learnt the story of your late exploit, and will go far to serve you.—I know the lady.

Dorset. Her name!

Francis. Let it suffice:—the proudest name in France, and that she herself is equal to her birth.—But, what assurance hast thou of her love?

Dorset. None but mine *own*!

Francis. Upon that principle, my Lord, she was at one time devoted to me, as I was entirely devoted to her; the illusion lasted for nine days, the full limit of love's wonders, when she dispelled it, and satisfied me that your principle is an unsafe one. If that were surety, scores of youthful lords might well dispute your title.—But the tourney waits: the lady shall decide.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III—*Street in front of the Palace.*

Enter AMAREL and TWIST, (a tailor.)

Twist. The tournament! the tournament!—O, there will be rare sport, rare jousting and tilting! since the time of Amadis, there has been nothing like it.—O that I were a knight!

Jester. Why, so thou art! a threefold knight, a knight of the *shears*, a knight of *tape* and *buckram*, and a knight of the *lists*. The thimble shall be thy shield, the goose thy buckler, and the needle thy sword. What better appointments couldst thou de-

sire?—Besides, thou shalt live by thy knight service, which is more than can be predicted of this day's champions.

Twist. My good Amarel, what part take you in the pageant?

Jester. The fool's part, truly, namely, the *best* part: the looking-on part; he who takes more, may chance to take a cracked crown.

Twist. Couldst thou not get me a place? Thou hast favour at court.

Jester. Thy best place is the shop-board. This day should be kept by thyself, the armourer, and the surgeon, as a jubilee, in all time to come.

Twist. Why, sweet Amarel?

Jester. Because your joint skill shall be put into liberal requisition upon such occasions; *thou* shalt repair the doublet and the hose: the *armourer* the breast-plates, casques and glaives: and the *surgeon* the fractured bones; of all which, either there will be no lack, or I am no prophet.

Twist. Does his Grace, the King, attend the sports?

Jester. Aye, what is left of him: though, by the mass, death *tilts* with him so closely, it is supposed this effort will prove fatal.

Twist. Heaven guard his royal life.

Jester. Come now, *Twist*, change vestments with me: I doff the motley in thy favour.

Twist. Wherefore, sweet *Jester*?

Jester. Because thou art the greater fool; thou prayest unwisely: think of the realm in mourning! The King's death will be more to thee than his life! Pray not then against a full pocket: 'tis the nobility of thy craft, thy very sovereignty, the only difference between thee and the King, rightly considered, is but the difference between hat and breeches; he wears his crown on his head, and thou carriest them in thy poche. Be chary then of thy chances, and forget not thou hast a friend at Court: a firm friend,—one who has no changeable habits, except those which he wears outside, and for which he is indebted to thee.

Twist. Most true, Master Amarel.

Jester. Haste then to thy mystery, while I betake myself to mine. Hark! the clarion sounds! vanish thou, remnant?

Twist. Adieu—adieu, Master Amarel! but wilt thou report to me the order of the list?

Jester. I will report to thee to the last stitch—to the last basting, and thou shalt exult amidst the carnage of lace, silk, embroidery and broadcloth. Adieu—Adieu.

(*Exeunt in opposite directions.*)

SCENE IV—*Tournament—Court Procession—King and Queen take their seats in the centre of the Balcony, while the Ladies arrange themselves in the order of their rank, on either side, with their Attendants—Lastly, Enter STELLA OF MONTMORENCI, with CHARMEAN, who take their seats near to the Queen.*

King Louis. My Lord Valois.

Francis. Most gracious Sir.

King Louis. This pageant which, in honour of the Queen,
(A poor requital for so rich a gift,)
We have appointed, must exact from thee
Those duties which disease and age withhold
In our own person.

Francis. Your Majesty
Confides to an unworthy deputy
Those powers which royalty alone should sway;
May Heav'n the grievous malady remove,
That thus transfers to my reluctant hand
An office that so well becomes the King.

King Louis. Heaven will remove it: there alone we trust!
Think of me as a pageant in this pageant;
Life's show will soon be over! I have lived
Surrounded by my loving, faithful subjects:
So would I die.—Pray let the tilt proceed.

(*Trumpet—Enter Herald, Knights, and Pages, wearing their respective colours: and, after kneeling to the King and Queen, bow before their Mistresses, and pass off the Stage into the Lists.*)

Enter SUFFOLK, magnificently attired, and DORSET in black armour, engaged in conversation—visors down.

King Louis. My Lord Valois, what stranger knights are those,
Who pause and parley gravely with each other,
Regardless of the jousts?—Inquire their names!—

(*To the Herald.*)

Stella. 'T is he, my Charmean! O, I should expire,
To see him bow before some haughty dame:
While all neglected, this poor, fluttering heart,
Pants for a passing smile,—and pants in vain!

Charmean. Fear nothing, Lady! he surveys unmoved,
This host of charms, as one whose soul is fixed!
See'st thou that chain entwin'd around his crest?

Stella. 'T is mine!—'t is mine! Could we attract his eye!
Methinks the very tumult of my heart
Might lure him to me!

(*FRANCIS, SUFFOLK, and DORSET advance towards the King, visors raised.*)

- Francis.* My Liege,—
The Duke of Suffolk, and Lord Marquis Dorset.
- King Louis.* England's Grand Marshal, and his gallant friend:
Pylades, and Orestes! Let them approach.
(*To Suffolk.*) Most noble Duke, it grieves us to perceive,
Holding ourselves a debtor for your service,
That our fair realm, in its assembled charms,
Finds you unmov'd, and leaves the debt unpaid!
—Thou art the foster brother of the Queen:
So shalt thou wear her colours for our sake.
- Suffolk.* Unworthy as I am, most Royal Sir,
Still more unworthy should I stand approv'd,
By shrinking from this guerdon.
(*Kneels, and the Queen throws a rich scarf over his neck.*)
- King Louis.* My vallant Marquis, from your restless eye,
We might do violence to some choice foregone,
Should we select for you.
- Dorset.* Thanks to your Highness: being somewhat dazzled,
The doubt is rather where I should not choose,
Than where I should.
- Stella.* Now, Charmean:—now, while he approaches us.
(*CHARMEAN drops her Lady's Glove—DORSET raises, and turns to present it to STELLA.*)
- Dorset.* Fair Lady:—
By the Dragon and St. George!—'t is my Divinity!
Fair Lady, chance has so far favoured me.
With this dear token, may I dare to hope,
You will vouchsafe to bless that happy chance,
And seal it mine forever!
- Stella.* Who wins by chance—by chance may lose his gains.
- Dorset.* Therefore I crave your warrant for my spoils.
- Stella.* My Lord, you are a traitor to your faith:
I grant no largess to a knight in chains.
- Dorset.* Let me be ever thus, when bound by thee.
- Princess Mary.* Sweet Montmorenci, be not obdurate:
Let me be mediator. Noble Dorset,
She must relent: be earnest in thy suit;
Thou were not born to shame in love or war!
Come, yield! bright Stella, yield!
- Stella.* Your Highness wills it!
The field is won, when majesty and beauty
Espouse the cause of valour: but, remember,
If thou shouldst prove victorious in the fight,
I scorn divided glory!—all, or nothing!

Dorset.

All were too worthless for so rich a prize.

*(Trumpets sound—FRANCIS, SUFFOLK, and DORSET enter Lists.)**Herald.*

Now, sound the charge, and Heaven defend the right!

*(AMAREL, and French and English Attendants in the fore-ground.)**Attendant.*

Valois!—Valois!—St. Denis and Valois!

See, where victorious Francis spurs his steed,

Full in the centre of the English knights.

O, gallant Prince!—Now, he assails proud Suffolk!

Jester.

Nay, 't is the young Lord Percy! By St.

His casque was forg'd in Vulcan's armory,

Or, it were cleft in twain!—Percy's unhors'd!

*Requiescat in pace, valiant youth!**(Shouts within—Valois!—Valois!)**Attendant.*

See! see! behold the knight in sable armour,

How gallantly he dashes on the foe!

Observe the well pois'd spear,—the lofty bearing!

—Now—now, defend thee knight!—'t is all in vain!

He hurls him to the earth!

*(Shouts—Dorset! Dorset!)**Attendant.*

Now, Francis charges again!—He is a very comet in the field!

Jester.

True! true!—but, mark ye, he has encountered a fixed star;
 he is unhorsed by noble Brandon!—unhors'd and wounded! Ha!
 Suffolk is now attacked by a huge knight!—'t is the Bavarian
 Hercules—Hold thy own, brave Suffolk! Ah! the blow from the
 battle-axe of the German has brought the Duke to embrace his
 saddle-bow!—Good night, brave Suffolk!

*(Shouts—Bavaria! Bavaria!)**(Queen shrieks and faints.)**King Louis.*

Help! help!—the Queen swoons!—Sound the retreat!

Attendant.

Now, behold Suffolk regains his seat: his falchion gleams
 in the air; it descends like a thunderbolt!—Peace to Bavaria!

*(Retreat sounded—Shouts Suffolk! Suffolk! Suffolk!)**(Re-enter the Knights—receive their rewards and tokens—flourish of Trumpets, and curtain falls, while the Queen is in the act of placing a garland on the brow of Suffolk, and Stella upon that of Dorset.)*

ACT V.

SCENE I—*Street in front of the Palace.**Enter AMAREL and TWIST.*

Jester. Well, Twist, I have thus kept faith with thee. Thou know'st now from helm to hauberk, nay, from head to heel, the day's adventure.

Twist. Were none of the wounds mortal, good Master Amarel?

Jester. None, but those inflicted by the ladies' glances. Ha! Buckram, thou hast an eye to business—thou would'st not loose customers. The Bavarian must have had a glimpse at the great secret, for his eye gleamed like a firebrand when he received the blow upon the sconce.

Twist. How did his highness endure his toil?—Did not his strength desert him?

Jester. No—but his *weakness* did not sustain him; for, as I predicted, he swooned at the close, and his royal life is despaired of. I saw the physician after he left the good King, e'en now.

Twist. What said he?

Jester. He said nothing—looked mysteriously—mystery and mischief go together. He shook his head—and after that comes shaking hands and taking leave. I fear it is all over with the poor King. But he will have a gallant successor. Yet would I have given more for the King's possession than the Duke's reversion, while in the hands of that dare-devil Englishman. Why he treated the heir presumptive with no more deference than he would his grandmother's farthingale.

Twist. Most marvellous!

Jester. I tell thee, Twist, he cut and slashed him, as thou would'st a small pattern—I thought it was all over with France. Nevertheless, the brave Valois, by the rapidity of his blows, made the fire fly, like sunbeams, about the helmet of his adversary, until, at length, the Bavarian, by a blow from his battle-axe, changed the complexion of the fight.

Twist. Valiantly done. What did Suffolk then?

Jester. Wherefore, in return, Suffolk changed the Bavarian's complexion. The Queen's shriek operated like magic upon him—for, raising himself in his seat, after scarcely recovering from

the blow, he dealt his antagonist such a stroke over the casque as to place him hors du combat. A moiety of such blows upon the *paunch*, would have knocked the giant's brains out—but, thanks to dulness, his pate was invulnerable, and only slightly suffered from the concussion between steel and lead. But delay me no longer, good knight of the shears—cut short the thread of thy discourse.

Twist. One more word, Master Amarel.—Thou goest now to the Palace!

Jester. Aye, forsooth!—thou hast *measured* my purpose rightly:—Where else should a fool go?—"T is his only abiding place!—"Birds of a feather," you know——

Twist. Well, then, wilt thou make interest for me there with the great ones!—There will be a change of fashion with the change of times!

Jester. Verily I will!—Nay, thy own merit shall plead for thee!—They can do less without thee, than thou canst without them! Go thy way, Twist, and balance my account upon thy ledger with—a friend at Court!

(*Exeunt different ways.*)

SCENE II—*Room in the Palace.*

Enter SUFFOLK and DORSET, from opposite sides of the stage.

Dorset. The game's your own, my Lord.—The King is dead.

Suffolk. Dead! Dorset!—Nay, prithee, do not mock me!

Dorset. E'en now, I met the posting messenger
Full fraught with the sad tidings—Bent to know
All that pertained to thee, I wrung them from him,
And sooth'd compunctious conscience with a bribe.

Suffolk. Thou art the truest and the best of friends.

Dorset. Why, I am happy—Montmorency's mine!
And, if you are the man I hold my friend,
Scarce shall the sun set on the obsequies
Of the departed King, ere you assert
A lover's right, and wed the widowed Queen.

Suffolk. What, art thou mad? Will the despotic Prince,
Himself devoted to the lovely Queen,
Approve this union, and defeat his hopes?

Dorset. Approve it? No! But I approve it, Suffolk,
And crave no royal signet. Some league hence
Stands a Carthusian Convent, where a priest,
Won by my gold, this very night shall wait,

To crown triumphant friendship with his blessing,
And register the vows of wedded faith.
What should he fear whom Heaven smiles upon ?

Suffolk. Ah, Dorset! for myself, I have no fears;—
But can I sacrifice the peace—the life
Of one who, in confiding, generous love,
Builds all her happiness and joy on me?

Dorset. Resign her, then:—Bestow her on your rival.
—Your boasted love is like the cataract
Which foams and rages, while impediments
Obstruct its swelling surge:—Give it full sway,
And, lo! its silvery stream glides gently on,
And lulls itself to sleep, with its own music:
Or, like an o'erspent Gladiator, who,
Triumphant in the ring, when vict'ry's spoils
Flash on his eye, is powerless to grasp them;—
And dies, deploring, all his struggles past!

Suffolk. Give me thy hand:—"T is but one effort more!
Despair and Hope distract my tortur'd heart
By a divided reign—neither will yield;
And thus I give pre-eminence to *one*,
Or shun them *both*, in death.

Dorset. Bravely resolved!—Talk of despair and death!—
Who lives to love, must ever love to live—
Who dies to love, might almost love to die:—
In life or death, my motto still shall be,
Firm hands, warm hearts, and love's supremacy!

(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE III—*Room in the Palace hung with mourning—PRINCESS MARY reclining upon a Divan.*

Princess Mary. "Maiden—mother—throneless queen—
Widow in her wedding state!"—
Thus far my doom's accomplished; what remains,
If the prophetic spell, be good for *good*,
As well as *evil*, shall repair the past.
Lie still, my throbbing heart, and do not mock
These melancholy trappings. How awful is the scene,
When weeping sorrow clings around the tomb
Of the departed!—but more awful still
The artificial, empty, cold disguise
Of outward grief, when all within is joy!

Enter Attendant.

Attendant. Madam, a holy father craves admittance.

Princess Mary. Let him approach. Heaven's ghostly messenger
Becomes the house of death.

(*Exit Attendant, and enter Prophet.*)

Prophet. Benedicite, fair daughter!

Princess Mary. Thanks! reverend friar! to your holy purpose.

Prophet. Dost thou not know me?

Princess Mary. Ah! that voice—that look—but still it cannot be!
The waves divide us. Speak, quickly! who art thou?—
Why art thou here?

Prophet. Madam, at your bidding—Know'st thou this pledge,
(*Presenting a Ring*)
And the assurance that attended it:—
“Should time restore me to the blessings I have lost,
Present thou then this ring, and name thy boon;—
’Tis thine, upon the promise of a princess!”

Princess Mary. Those blessings unrestored, yet name thy boon.

Prophet. The hand that wore that ring, and gave it value!

Princess Mary. Audacious slave!—Am I then sunk so low,
The sister and the relict of a king,
That base-born vassals, wandering mendicants
Should dare!—

Prophet. Rely upon your royal word.

Princess Mary. Name your reward, and take it.

Prophet. Still thy hand.

Princess Mary. Unworthy as thou art, if I must speak,
And tell thee what thy science should divine,
That hand is not mine own.

Prophet. I know it all, and therefore t' is I claim it:
’T was plighted to young Suffolk.

Princess Mary. Was, is, and shall be, dark Inquisitor!

Prophet. Those blessed words redeem the double pledge:
Behold him at thy feet! (*Throwing off his disguise.*)

Princess Mary. Amazement! Suffolk!

Suffolk. Aye, lady!—and the Prophet of Saint Paul's!

Princess Mary. Take thy reward—this free and willing hand
Was thine, is thine, and shall be thine forever!

Suffolk. Oh, matchless love! thy triumph is complete!
The prophecy's fulfilled!

“ Broken vows again are plighted.
Sundered hearts once more united.”

Princess Mary. Not yet, my Lord ; I tremble, while I think
How far voluptuous Francis may exert
The sovereign power to crush these budding hopes.

Suffolk. England is open to us.

Princess Mary. *There*, my ambitious, arbitrary brother,
Moved by new schemes of secret policy,
Again shall sway my fortunes to his will.
Alas, my Lord! the light that gleams upon us,
Serves but to gild the sky's impending horrors,
And render fate more fearful!

Suffolk. Nay, droop not, Love—Hope still shall dawn upon us ;
And, like the breaking of a glorious day,
Scatter the gathering clouds, that mar our peace.
Trust to my guidance ; and, in one short hour,
I'll clasp thee in that longing, lov'd embrace,
Which kings may envy, but dare not dissolve.
—Nay, do not shrink!—this moment seals our doom!
Hard by, a lone sequestered convent stands,
Where a Carthusian priest, won to our cause,
With Dorset and fair Montmorency, waits
To bless our union, and confirm thee mine—
Forever mine—beyond the reach of chance!

Queen. Oh, Suffolk! I should ill requite thy love,
Thy all-enduring and unchanging love,
Could I deny thee aught! Receive my hand ;—
My heart was ever thine.

Suffolk. Precious—precious gift—
The rich reward of pains and perils past—
The glorious harbinger of future bliss!
Let us away—evil surrounds us here ;—
The very walls of palaces are spies,
And note our inmost thoughts!—Away! then love.

Queen. Lead on, my Lord!—When arm'd in pure affection,
The heart forgets its fears, and covets danger ;
Sever'd from thee, life loses all its charms,
And death were welcome, in thy constant arms!

(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE IV.

Enter AMAREL and TWIST.

Jester. Yes, yes ; it is all over, Twist. Good cause forsooth for the
Queen's swooning and the King's dying. Dux fugit, et Dux

fœmina facti—which means, when correctly rendered, that the Queen and the Duke have run off together.

Twist. What Queen—what Duke?

Jester. Why, dolt, our Queen, and the English Duke. The whole court is scandalized thereby. The new King, in person, attended by his guards, has already set off in pursuit. I offered my service, too, but folly was unnecessary. And why, dost suppose?

Twist. Because wisdom was better suited to the occasion.

Jester. Thou hast it *not*. It was because there were fools enough engaged in the fools errand, without me. I regret not the loss of the employment. Whether the case be of king or subject, prince or peasant, lord or vassal, I'm for the sovereignty of love. Success to the fugitives say I.

Twist. Yet, I like not these private ceremonies, good master Amarel. Births, funerals, and marriages, should be well attended, for example sake.

Jester. Ay, and for the sake of thy vocation, for it comes to this. The loss of a royal wedding is some thousands of francs out of thy coffers. But console thyself, Twist, thy loss has, no doubt been the gain of some deserving priest, and thus shalt thou, even against thy will, lay up treasures for thyself in Heaven. But, by St. Snip, thou must alter much, ever to enjoy them.

Twist. Alter! am I not mending my habits every day?

Jester. Thou mendest the habits of thy customers, but thine own, instead of being out at the *knees*, which would imply a pious and becoming propensity, are woefully out at the pockets and the elbows. Cast off these rags of iniquity, and put on the raiment of righteousness, or rest assured thou wilt hereafter undergo the fate of thy own goose, with this difference, that thou shalt be heated but *once*, and that shall be forever. Reflect on this and repent. Pray *more* and cabbage *less*.

(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE V—*Carthusian Convent.*

Enter SUFFOLK—PRINCESS—DORSET—STELLA—PERCY—ANNA BOLEYN—FRIAR
and Attendant.

Dorset. Now, reverend friar! to your sacred office—
The temporal symbols of eternal love;
Haste!—join our hands by holy mother church!—
The times forbid delay!

Friar. The Heavens forbid a rash irreverent haste:
All forms must be observed.

Dorset. Why, ghostly father, 'tis an easy service,
 United in affection as we are,
 And waiting but thy blessing on the union,
 Thou may'st dispense with tedious ceremony.
 When votaries reluctant kneel before thee,
 Omit no form that binds them to each other,
 Lest struggling, they escape and shame thy work :
That is a work of form, and must be formal,
 Or it is naught : but here our willing hearts
 Are coupled to thy hand—and, though unbound,
 They cleave together, and require no tie
 But thy frail outward tenure.

Friar. Approach, my children, and receive from me,
 The humble instrument of Heaven's high will,
 Those sacred sanctions of devoted love,
 Which last beyond the tomb ! (*Knocking from without.*)
 What noise is this ?—What sacrilegious foot
 Breaks on this cloistered silence ?

Dorset. Proceed, good Abbot!—Be not thus dismayed :
 He who intrudes upon this ceremony,
 Digs his own grave :—this sword 's his epitaph !
 (*Francis, from without.*)

Francis. A royal wedding, and the king no guest !

Friar. 'Tis the king's voice ! we are undone, my Lord !

Dorset. Thy office is *undone*, thou prosing priest,
 Fit only for some slow funereal rite,
 Hymen's bright torch grows dim within thy grasp,
 As a sepulchral lamp !—Your pleasure, sir !

Enter FRANCIS.

Suffolk. My Lord, I know your purpose. Listen then to me :
 I claim this lady as my wedded wife,
 By her own free consent ; and he who severs
 Our united hearts, first carves his way through mine.

Francis. Put up your swords. I profit by thy counsel,
 Noble Duke :—“ This is no scene for blood.”

Suffolk. Nay, but it shall be, e'er I yield my right
 To any prince or king in Christendom.

Francis. Have we no rights, my Lord ?—Shall it be said
 By after-ages, in reproach of France,
 That her fair queen, distrustful of our faith,
 Pronounced her marriage-vow at the lone shrine

Of a sequestered abbey?
 No, valiant sir! this must not, shall not be!
 I claim the royal warrant to dispose,
 Not 'gainst her love, but with her plighted love,
 Of that fair hand. Fair madam, by your leave!—

(places her hand in that of Suffolk.)

Suffolk. Pardon the wrong we've done you, gracious Sire,
 By our unjust suspicions. Kneeling, thus,
 We pray forgiveness, and invoke upon you
 A life of glory—and a death of peace.

Dorset. Your highness is a most efficient priest.—
 Despairing of your medicine, you perceive
 I yield me, like a martyr, to my fate,
 And thus embrace my chains.

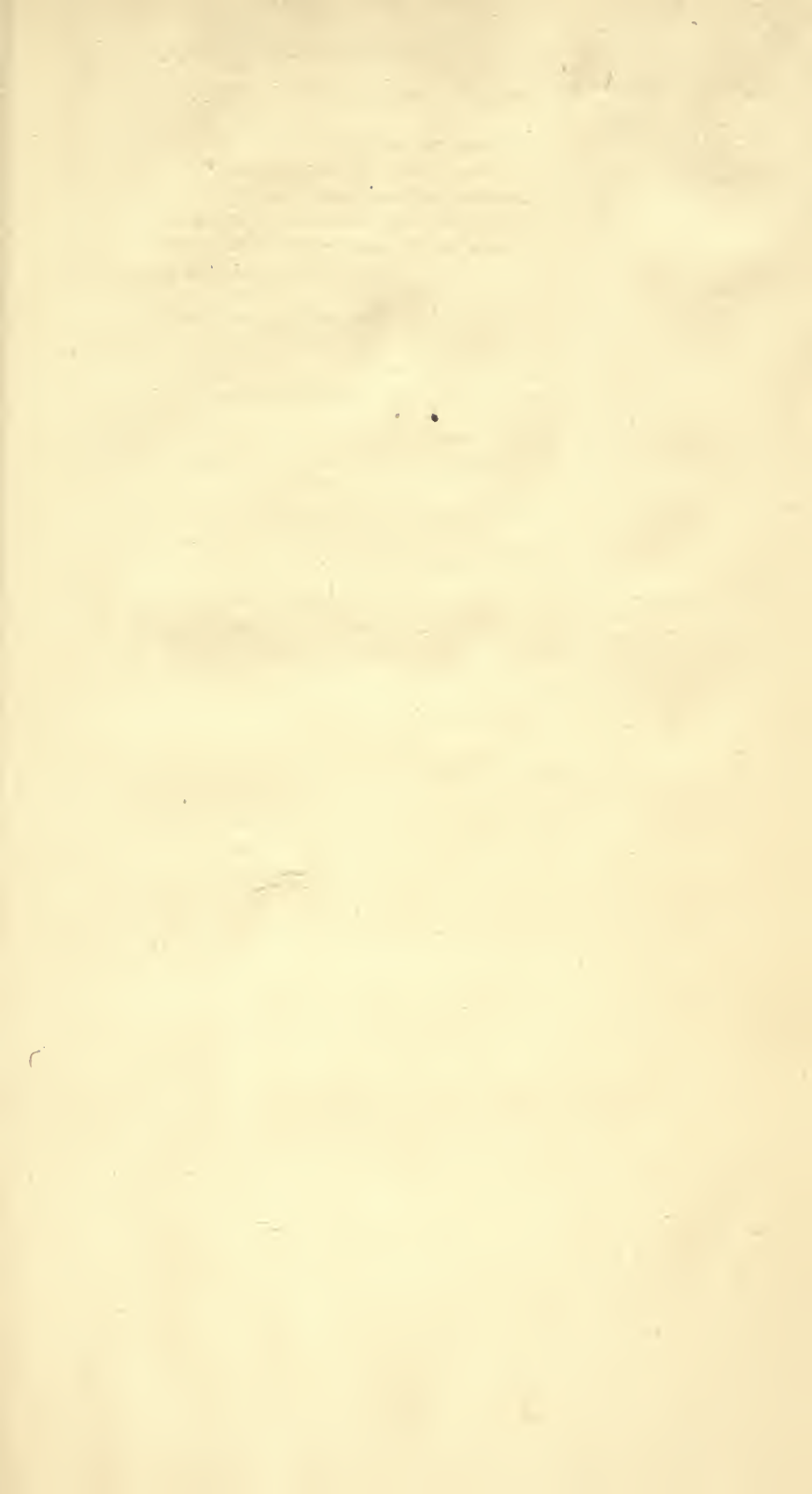
Stella. May they be ever light—but never fragile.

Francis. What, fair Cousin, a most loyal subject,
 Obsequious to thy queen and her example,
 Thou would's't wed too—transfer thy beauty
 To a foreign clime, and leave my realms a waste.

Stella. My gratitude, my liege, shall still remain,
 And breathe a holier incense round thy throne
 Than beauty can impart.

Francis. We thus secure it—Dorset, she is thine!
 A monarch's gift, and worthy of a monarch.

Fearing that the publication of an *Errata* in the preceding work, might be almost as long as the work itself, we trust to the judgment of the readers for the correction of errors.





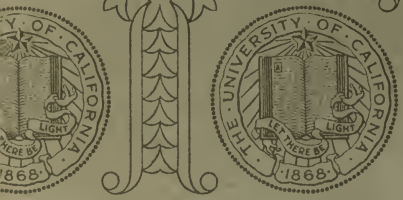




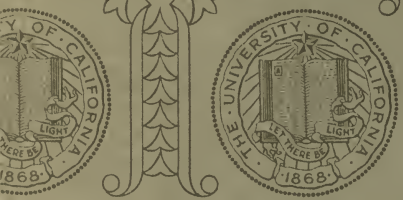




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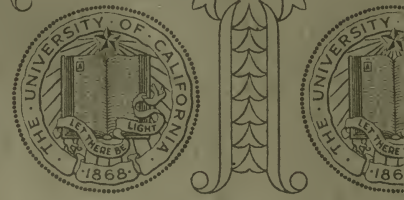


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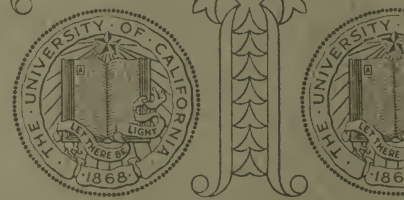
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